

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Colombia

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SUBJECT Liberal Subversive Activity

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1. A military uprising of Liberal origin was reportedly scheduled for 28 March 1951. The movement was indefinitely postponed, supposedly because of the indiscreet actions of one Fernando Soler Gomez,* a retired Army major, one of the organizers of the movement.
2. Between 13 March and 17 March 1951, Soler was in Barranquilla and Cartagena, where he attempted to contact port officials and the Army garrisons. Soler claimed that three interior garrisons and other military elements could be counted on by his movement. He was unsuccessful in obtaining the backing of active Army officers, but reportedly was offered the collaboration of retired Captain Luis Ariza, head of a reserve officers' group in Barranquilla. Soler was joined in Cartagena by one Rogelio Ayala and while there sent several telegrams to Bogota, using an assumed name. The police have made copies of these telegrams.
3. Upon his return to Bogota, Soler reported that the Barranquilla garrison would support the movement, but insisted that it take place on 28 March 1951. Previously he had declared in Barranquilla that civilians in Bogota would riot on that date. The leaders of the movement postponed the uprising when they learned of Soler's indiscretions and the fact that his statements regarding the support of the Barranquilla garrison were false.
4. The military uprising is related to a leftist Liberal plan known as "Project A***", but according to Moises Prieto, an organizer for this project, it does not contemplate the use of military forces. However, Dr. Danilo de la Pava, in charge of liaison with the military for Project A, stated:
 - a. Considerable success has been achieved in getting military support, chiefly of retired officers, but including a number of active officers.
 - b. The movement could count on the Bucaramanga and Tolima garrisons and two "military units" in Bogota.
 - c. Civilians in Bogota would stage a riot prior to any military action.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1. A liberal group from Santander Province has offered a substantial sum of money for the purchase of guns. This money has not yet been received.

2. The guns are to be smuggled into the country.

3. Fernando Soler had been sent into hiding and would not be used in the future.

4. Efraim del Valle, President of the Senate, is a leader of the movement.

5. A separate source reported that Guillermo Leon Ponce, a Liberal leader, knew of a military movement in which Fernando Soler was involved. Ponce stated that Soler had been sent into hiding because of his many indiscretions. He was aware that several military garrisons were involved and said that even if the attempt to overthrow the Government had failed, the Liberals may have taken a number of guns, which would have been worthwhile.

25X1A [REDACTED] Comment: Soler stated he had connections with the Communist Party through a relative who ranked high in the Party, probably Erasmo Soler, Secretary of Finances for the Departmental Committee of Cundinamarca. He further claimed to have been a military advisor to Elisco Velasquez in the llanos last year.

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